

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5       1. A mask for a video game controller having a plurality of  
actuators, the mask comprising:

a thin plastic non-rigid shell that conforms to the shape of  
the controller;

10     means permitting the actuators to be operated from outside the  
shell; and

a visible actuator guide mounted on the shell to facilitate  
game play.

15     2. The mask of claims 1, in which the permitting means  
comprises openings in the shell in registration with the  
actuators.

3. The mask of claim 1, in which the guide visually  
identifies game influencing functions of the actuators.

20     4. The mask of claim 1, in which the guide has a first  
visible column that identifies the actuators and a second  
visible column that identifies game influencing actuator  
functions, the columns being aligned with each other.

25     5. The mask of claim 1, additionally comprising means for  
releasably securing the shell to the controller.

30     6. The mask of claim 5, in which the securing means  
comprises flexible integral side panels on the shell that curl  
around the controller.

7. The mask of claim 1, in which the guide is mounted on  
the shell with adhesive.

8.     The mask of claim 1, in which the guide is secured to the shell by impressions on the surface of the shell.

5       9.    The mask of claim 1, additionally comprising a guide holder on the shell, the guide being mounted on the shell in the guide holder.

10      10.   The mask of claim 9, additionally comprising one or more other guides that can be substituted for the guide in the holder.

15      11.   The mask of claim 1, in which a major portion of the shell is rigid and the permitting means comprises resilient portions of the shell in registration with the actuators.

20      12.   The mask of claim 1, in which the shell is imprinted with an image suggestive of the game.

25      13.   A set of masks for a video game controller having a plurality of actuators, each mask corresponding to a different video game, each mask comprising:  
a thin plastic shell that conforms to the shape of the controller;  
means permitting the actuators to be operated from outside the shell; and  
a visible actuator guide unique to each video game mounted on the shell to facilitate use of the controller.

30      14.   The mask of claim 1, in which each shell is imprinted with game instructions with a different image suggestive of the game to which its mask corresponds.

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5       15. The mask of claim 14, in which the actuators are color  
coded and the guides identify actuator functions that are  
color coded to correspond to the actuators.

10      16. A method for human operation of a video game controller  
having a plurality of actuators, the method comprising:  
          placing a shell over the controller;  
          attaching to the shell a guide relating the actuators to game  
functions; and  
          operating the actuators to play the game while viewing the  
guide.

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